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BAGHDAD FOR POL, POL-MIL, NCT

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2/4/2016  
TAGS: PGOV PINS PHUM KDEM IZ  
SUBJECT: (SBU) KRG DETAINEES

REF: 05 KIRKUK 259

CLASSIFIED BY: RBELL, PRC, PRC, DOS.  
REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY. The Kurdistan Regional Government-Sulaymaniyah (KRG-S) Interior Ministry says it has information only on 15 of the 200 or so names on the U.S. list of individuals allegedly detained in Kirkuk and taken to the KRG. The Minister says 3 have been released and the remaining 12 had been convicted in Kirkuk province and are now being held in KRG prisons because of the shortage of prison space in Kirkuk province. The KRG-Erbil Interior Ministry says it has information on only 12 of the detainees and is "ready to do as asked" with those, e.g., release them. The Minister says that the MOI-E had simply been asked by the Kirkuk police to hold the detainees, not investigate them. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) Kurdistan Regional Government-Sulaymaniyah (KRG-S) Interior Minister Othman Haji Mahmud (whom PUK expects to stay on as Interior Minister for the unified KRG) told Regional Coordinator (RC) and Deputy (DRC) January 26 that he had information only on 15 of the 200 or so names on the U.S. list of alleged Kirkuk provincial detainees taken to the KRG. He said 3 had been released: Ramazan Taha Awad on December 31; Arkan Hamad Latif on January 16; and Ahmed 'Abd-al-Wahid Ahmed on January 18. Othman said the remaining 12 had been tried and convicted in Kirkuk province and were now being held in KRG prisons because of the shortage of prison space in Kirkuk province. RC agreed it was not a problem if those properly convicted of crimes in Kirkuk were serving their prison terms in the KRG if the transfer was done according to law and was transparent.

¶3. (S) KRG-Erbil (KRG-E) Interior Minister Karim Sinjari told RC, DRC and IPAO January 29 that the MOI had information on 12 of the detainees and was "ready to do as asked" with those, e.g., release them. RC asked Sinjari to check KRG-E to see whether it ever held any of the others. Sinjari agreed to do so. He remarked that the MOI-E had simply been asked by the Kirkuk police to hold the detainees, not investigate their alleged crimes. He admitted that taking and holding them this way might have been a mistake for the MOI. (NOTE: Coalition Forces have no objection to releasing the 12. We have approached the Kirkuk police to determine if they have any objection. END NOTE.) Sinjari separately told the UK Consul General that the 12 were those arrested by Coalition Forces. Sinjari said other cases involved normal police liaison between the Kirkuk police and KRG-E police on criminal or terrorist charges.

¶4. (S) COMMENT. REO will follow up with the U.S. military to request data on which detainees the U.S. military turned over to the KRG-S and KRG-E. If that list includes more than the

respective KRG MOIs admit they either hold or have released, we will follow up again.

DEAN